



# The End of Reconstruction

## Objectives

1. Explain why support for Reconstruction declined.
2. Describe how African Americans in the South lost many newly gained rights.
3. Describe the sharecropping system and how it trapped many in a cycle of poverty.
4. Identify the signs that the South began to develop a stronger economy by the 1880s.

## Main Idea

A deal between President Hayes and southern Democrats led to the end of Reconstruction.

## Vocabulary Builder

**factor** (FAK tor) *n.* condition or quality that causes something else to happen

## Prepare to Read

### Reading Skill

**Evaluate Proposals** When you read a proposal, ask yourself: Is the proposal likely to work as a way of advancing its goal?

## Vocabulary Builder

### High-Use Words

**factor**, p. 558

**inferior**, p. 561

### Key Terms and People

**poll tax**, p. 560


**literacy test**, p. 560

**grandfather clause**, p. 560

**segregation**, p. 560

**Homer Plessy**, p. 561

**sharecropper**, p. 561

 **Background Knowledge** You have read how Reconstruction brought both positive change and turmoil to the South. In this section, you will learn how Reconstruction's end led to new hardships for African Americans in the South.

## Reconstruction's Conclusion

Support for Radical Republicans declined as Americans began to forget the Civil War and focus on bettering their own lives. Scandals within President Grant's administration played an important role. Grant made poor appointments to public offices, often appointing personal friends. Many of the appointees proved to be corrupt. Although Grant himself had no part in the corruption that took place, his reputation suffered. Grant won reelection in 1872, but many northerners lost faith in the Republicans and their policies.

**Self-rule for the South** Meanwhile, many people in both North and South were calling for the withdrawal of federal troops and full amnesty for former Confederates. Starting with Virginia in 1869, opponents of Republicans began to take back the South, state by state. Slowly, they chipped away at the rights of African Americans.

In some states, campaigns of terror by secret societies were a major **factor** in restoring their power. By 1874, Republicans had lost control of all but three southern states. By 1877, Democrats controlled those, too.

**The Election of 1876** The end of Reconstruction was a direct result of the presidential election of 1876. Because of disputes over election returns, the choice of the President was decided by

Congress. There, a deal between the Republicans and Democrats settled the election—and sealed the fate of Reconstruction.

The candidates in 1876 were Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio for the Republicans and Samuel J. Tilden of New York for the Democrats. The Republicans said they would continue Reconstruction, and the Democrats said they would end it.

Tilden won the popular vote by 250,000 votes. However, 20 electoral votes were in dispute. Without them, Tilden fell one vote short of the 185 needed to win in the electoral college.

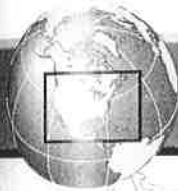
To resolve the issue, Congress appointed a special commission of 15 members. Most of them were Republicans. The commission gave all 20 electoral votes to Hayes. Rather than fight the decision in Congress, Democrats agreed to accept it. Hayes had privately told them that he would end Reconstruction. Once in office, Hayes removed all federal troops from the South.



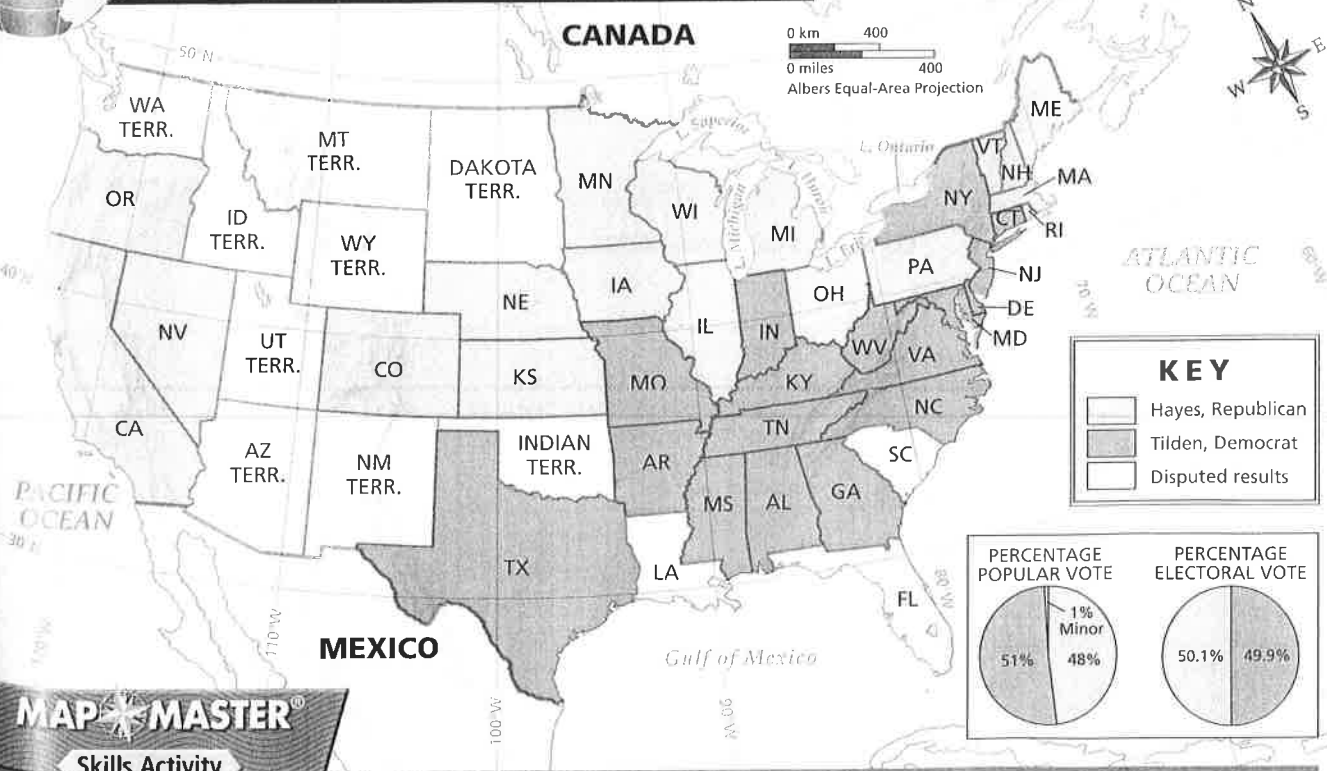
### Evaluate Proposals

What proposal did Hayes make to the Democrats in order to end their opposition? How did this proposal meet the goals of both the Democrats and Republicans?

**Checkpoint** What factors contributed to the end of Reconstruction?



## Election of 1876: Shifting Power Balance



### MAP MASTER

#### Skills Activity

Although Samuel Tilden won the popular vote, Rutherford B. Hayes was declared the winner in the election.

- Read a Map Key** In which region did Tilden have the most support?
- Draw Conclusions** Based on this map, do you think the Civil War ended sectionalism? Explain.

MapMaster online

**For:** Interactive map  
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## Main Idea

Laws passed by southern states after Reconstruction cost African Americans most of their civil rights.

## African Americans Lose Rights

With the end of Reconstruction, African Americans began to lose their remaining political and civil rights in the South. Southern whites used a variety of techniques to stop African Americans from voting. They passed laws that applied to whites and African Americans but were enforced mainly against African Americans.

One such law imposed a **poll tax**—a personal tax to be paid before voting. This kept a few poor whites and many poor freedmen from voting. Another law required voters to pass a **literacy test** or a test to see if a person can read and write. In this case, voters were required to read a section of the Constitution and explain it.

However, a **grandfather clause** allowed illiterate white males to vote. The grandfather clause was a provision that allowed a voter to avoid a literacy test if his father or grandfather had been eligible to vote on January 1, 1867. Because no African American in the South could vote before 1868, nearly all were denied the right to vote.

Southern states created a network of laws requiring **segregation**, or enforced separation of races. These so-called Jim Crow laws barred the mixing of races in almost every aspect of life. Blacks and whites were born in separate hospitals and buried in separate cemeteries. The laws decreed separate playgrounds, restaurants, and schools. They required African Americans to take back seats or separate cars on railroads and streetcars. When African Americans challenged the restrictions in court, they lost. State and local courts consistently ruled that Jim Crow laws were legal.

## Sharecropping Cycle of Poverty

1

### Planting the crop

Landowners give the sharecropper land, seed, and tools in exchange for a share in the crop. Sharecroppers buy goods and supplies from the landowner on credit.



In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld segregation laws. **Homer Plessy** had been arrested for sitting in a coach marked "for whites only." In the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Court ruled in favor of a Louisiana law requiring segregated railroad cars. The Court said a law could require "separate" facilities, so long as they were "equal."

This "separate but equal" rule was in effect until the 1950s. In fact, facilities for African Americans were rarely equal. For example, public schools for African Americans were almost always **inferior** to schools for whites.

**Checkpoint** What methods did southern states use to deprive African Americans of their rights?

## A Cycle of Poverty

At emancipation, many freedmen owned little more than the clothes they wore. Poverty forced many African Americans, as well as poor whites, to become sharecroppers. A **sharecropper** is a laborer who works the land for the farmer who owns it, in exchange for a share of the value of the crop.

The landlord supplied living quarters, tools, seed, and food on credit. At harvest time, the landlord sold the crop and tallied up how much went to the sharecroppers. Often, especially in years of low crop prices or bad harvests, the sharecroppers' share was not enough to cover what they owed the landlord for rent and supplies. As a result, most sharecroppers became locked into a cycle of debt.

### Vocabulary Builder

**inferior** (ihn FIR ee uhr) *adj.* of lower rank or status, or of poorer quality

### Main Idea

Freedmen farmers were forced into a cycle of poverty nearly impossible to escape.

### History Interactive

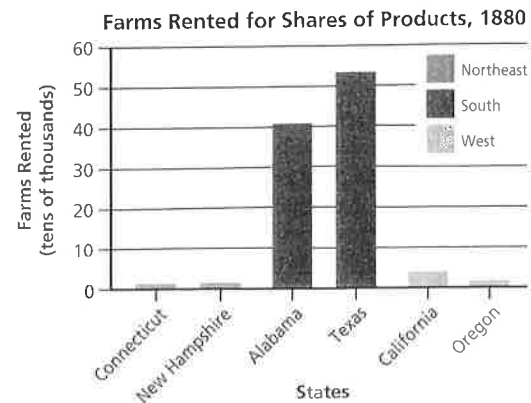
Explore the Sharecropping Cycle

Visit: [PHSchool.com](http://PHSchool.com)  
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**2** **Harvesting the crop and settling accounts**  
The sharecropper gives the landowner his crop. Landowner sells it and gives the tenant his share, minus the amount owed at the company store.

Farming land they did not own, sharecroppers were locked in a cycle of debt, as shown by the illustration. **Critical Thinking:** **Draw Conclusions** Why was it hard for sharecroppers to escape the debt cycle?

**3** **Cycle of debt**  
After a year of hard work, the sharecroppers often owed more than they had earned and had no choice but to offer the landlord a greater percentage of next year's crop.



Source: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research

# Links Across Time

## Fighting for Civil Rights

**1896** In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court upheld segregation laws in the South. These restrictions continued for more than 50 years.

**1950s–1960s** Some Americans launched a campaign to bring equal rights to African Americans. This civil rights movement used marches, petitions, and other public actions to end discrimination in education, use of public facilities, and voting.

## Link to Today online

**Civil Rights Today** Did the civil rights movement win equal rights for all Americans? Not everyone agrees. Go online to find out more about recent developments in civil rights.

**For:** Civil rights in the news


**Visit:** PHSchool.com

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**1963** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., speaks to Americans in Washington, D.C.

Opportunities dwindled for African Americans in southern towns and cities, too. African American artisans who had been able to find skilled jobs during Reconstruction increasingly found such jobs closed to them. Those with some education could become schoolteachers, lawyers, or preachers in the African American community. But most urban African Americans had to take whatever menial job they could find.

 **Checkpoint** How did many freedmen and whites become locked in a cycle of poverty?

## Main Idea

By the 1880s, the South had begun to develop its own resources and industries.

## Industrial Growth

It would be a long process, but during Reconstruction the South's economy began to recover. By the 1880s, new industries appeared. Southerners hailed a "New South," based on industrial growth.

The first element of the South's economy to begin recovery was agriculture. Cotton production, which had lagged during the war, quickly revived. By 1875, it was setting new records. Planters put more land into tobacco production, and output grew.

Southern investors started or expanded industries to turn raw materials into finished products. The textile industry came to play an important role in the southern economy.



The South had natural resources in abundance, but it had done little to develop them in the past. Atlanta newspaper editor Henry Grady described the funeral of a man from Georgia as follows:

“They buried him in the heart of a pine forest, and yet the pine coffin was imported from Cincinnati. They buried him within touch of an iron mine, and yet the nails in his coffin and the iron in the shovel that dug his grave were imported from Pittsburgh.”

—Henry Grady to the Bay State Club of Boston, 1889

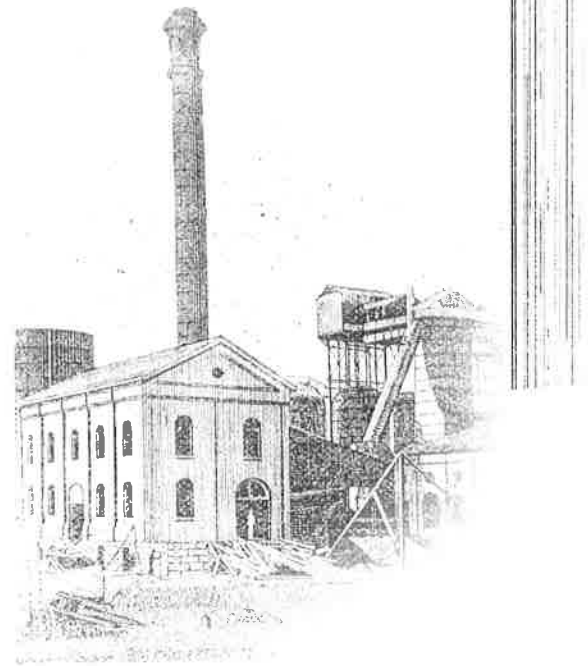
The South began to develop its own resources. New mills and factories grew up to use the South’s iron, timber, and oil. Lumber mills and furniture factories processed yellow pine and hardwoods from southern forests.

Southern leaders took great pride in the region’s progress. They spoke of a “New South” that was no longer dependent on “King Cotton.” An industrial age was underway, although the North was still far more industrialized.

✓ **Checkpoint** What was the “New South” that was emerging by 1900?

➤ **Looking Back and Ahead** When Reconstruction ended in 1877, its record showed many successes and some failures. Most importantly, all African Americans were finally citizens. Laws passed during Reconstruction, such as the Fourteenth Amendment, became the basis of the civil rights movement that took place almost 100 years later.

Factory in the “New South”



## Section 3 | Check Your Progress

### Progress Monitoring online

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### Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) Identify** Who were sharecroppers? How did they differ from landowners?  
**(b) Draw Conclusions** Why did so many sharecroppers live in poverty?
- (a) Recall** What is segregation?  
**(b) Analyze Cause and Effect** How did *Plessy v. Ferguson* make the fight against segregation more difficult?

### Reading Skill

- Evaluate Proposals** In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court proposed the idea of “separate but equal” facilities. Do you think this idea meets the goal of ensuring equal rights?

### Vocabulary Builder

Complete each of the following sentences so that the second part clearly shows your understanding of the key term.

- African Americans and whites had to pay a **poor tax** before \_\_\_\_\_.

- Because of laws in the South requiring **segregation**, African Americans and whites \_\_\_\_\_.

### Writing

- Rewrite the following passage to correct the errors. **Passage:** The 1876 presidential election decided by a special commission. Samuel J. Tilden a democrat won the Popular vote over republican Rutherford B. Hayes. However, their were 20 disputed electoral votes. A special commission made an agreement with the democrats.